

catalystKIDS

Parent Tools

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS



cat · a · lyst
kad(ə)ləst

noun

that which evokes a transformative process

kid
/kid/

noun

a child or young person

cat · a · lyst kid
kad(ə)ləst /kid/

noun

a biblically anchored, big-dreaming, world changing child or young person who evokes a transformative process in those around them



A Few Things to Consider

Before we get started, here are just a few suggestions to help prepare yourself for these conversations.

First, use this resource for what it is: a *guide*. There is no “one size fits all” approach to talking about these subjects with children, because there is no “one size fits all” child. You know your child best. ***You know how to best communicate with your child.*** Remember, God chose you and He did so for a reason. Be confident in that truth when talking with your children.

Focus on the relationship behind the rule... love will motivate in ways a law never could

Next, try to avoid saying things like “The Bible says...” when talking about scripture. Instead, say something like “God tells us in His word...”. This may seem like splitting hairs, but phrases like “the Bible tells us...” removes God from the focal point and can set the Bible up as a rulebook in the minds of our children. The most important thing to focus on when communicating scripture to your children is *the motivation behind the commandment*. Always remember, relationships are more important than rules. Sure we need rules, but ***love will motivate behaviors and beliefs in ways a law never could.***

Finally, ***be the example***. Talking with your kids about prayer? Let them hear when you are praying. Talking to them about the Bible? Let them “catch” you studying God’s word. It can be difficult if we let it be, but ***the more they see these disciplines in us, the more they will begin to show up in them.***

Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

Deuteronomy 6:7

friend

/frend/

noun

a person whom one knows and with whom one has a bond of mutual affection

in·flu·ence

/'inflʊəns/

noun

the capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behavior of someone or something, or the effect itself.



“Good” Friends?

In the book of Proverbs, God provides a great deal of wisdom on how the company we keep affects our lives. The underlying message of these Proverbs is this: if we spend time with people who do the right things, we will be more likely to do the right things; if we spend time with people who don't do the right things, we will be less likely to do the right things.

*Walk with the wise
and become wise,
for a companion of
fools suffers harm.*

Proverbs 13:20

Responsible parents know who their children's friends are, who their families are and what they believe. There is a natural desire to *protect* our children from kids we perceive as a potential bad influence as a result of their families, their beliefs and/or their behaviors. God is very clear in these Proverbs that the people we choose to spend our time with will have an affect on our lives, either positive or negative.

*Jesus answered
them, “It is not the
healthy who need a
doctor, but the sick.
I have not come to
call the righteous,
but sinners to
repentance.”*

Luke 5:31-32

In contrast, we have the response Jesus gave when questioned about the company He surrounded Himself with: “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick”. Protecting our children from all potential bad influences also denies them the opportunity to affect a positive change, to be a *catalyst*, in the lives of the children who perhaps most need a positive influence.

This contrast illustrates the need for *discernment*. There are times when our children need to be graciously, and intentionally steered away from certain friends, and times when they need to be unleashed into the lives of others. As parents, it is our responsibility to rely upon the Holy Spirit to show us the direction of influence in the friendship. If the influence is positive in either

direction, the relationship should be encouraged. If the influence is negative, the relationship should be changed.

Who's Kids Are They?

God tells us in Ephesians 6 that we are to stand firm in the face of Satan's attempts to tear us down. One of Satan's most powerful tactics is to get us to believe we are not who God tells us we are: His beloved child. In their book “Stomping Out The

*Do not fear, for I
have redeemed you;
I have summoned
you by name; you
are mine.*

Isaiah 43:1b

Darkness”, authors Neil T. Anderson and Dave Park state “[u]nderstanding our identity in Christ is absolutely essential to our success at living the Christian life. We can’t consistently behave in a way that’s different from the way we see or think about ourselves” (pg. 25). Knowing who God created us to be is critical to living out the dream He has for our lives.

*But to all who did
receive him, who
believed in his name,
he gave the right to
become children of
God,*

John 1:12

Help your children to understand that being God’s child (John 1:12) means they are a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17), masterfully and intentionally designed for a purpose (Ephesians 2:10, Psalm 139, Romans 8:28), free from condemnation and guilt (Galatians 5:1, Romans 8:1), assured of ultimate victory, and that absolutely nothing can ever separate us from God’s love (Romans 8:31-39). Read these passages with them, *explain* what they mean and let them respond. If you aren’t sure yourself, *ask someone*. Having a proper understanding of who they are in Christ will foster the self-assurance they will need to stand in the face of any negative influences.

Peer Pressure

Peer pressure is simply *influence*, which can be negative or positive depending on the situation. One friend (or a group of friends) influencing another child to stop a negative behavior is an example of positive peer pressure. When it comes to peer pressure, we encourage our children to be a positive influence and prepare them to handle any negative influence.

With training, practice, and a firm understanding of who they *really* are it becomes easier for them to make decisions which reflect their identity as a child of God. Let them make decisions, even those which seem trivial. Give them choices within boundaries. Provide opportunities to practice making good choices and teach them about the consequences of the decisions they make. Then, as they get older and have had practice at making increasingly consequential choices, you and they can have more confidence in their ability to make good choices, even in the face of negative influences.

*Put on the full armor
of God, so that you
can take your stand
against the devil’s
schemes.*

Ephesians 6:11



Bullying

Bullying is an unfortunate reality in our lives, whether in grade schools or beyond. God's Word provides us with very clear teaching on how we are to respond to others, including when we witness someone in need of help.

The intent of this Parent Tool is to help you be prepared to have a conversation with your child about influence and the effects of their relationships with others. There are multiple resources dedicated to the topic of bullying which can address it much more thoroughly than we are able to in this format.

For more information on bullying, we encourage you to investigate the following resources:

<http://www.openbible.info/topics/bullying>

<http://www.pacer.org/bullying/>

<http://www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org/kab/>

<http://www.stopbullying.gov/>

So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

Matthew 7:12

Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to act.

Do not envy the violent or choose any of their ways.

Proverbs 3:27, 31

Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God

John 1:12

See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!

1 John 3:1a

I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

Psalms 139:14

Why Provide These Tools?

We are providing these tools because we believe in you and because we need you.

God sovereignly chose **you** as the parent of your kid. ***God believes in you, so we believe in you.*** By equipping you with some simple resources you can use in the difficult discussions that come up, we want you to feel confident in your role as the primary spiritual influence in your kids lives.

It is easy to think of the Kid's Pastor, or some other Kid's Leader as the person with the most spiritual influence in your kids lives, but those people are only around your kids for a couple hours every week. You are the ones that are doing life with your kids and ***you have more impact on their spiritual development than anyone else ever could.*** We want to partner with you in raising a generation of CATALYST KIDS!

... so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the LORD your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands...Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

Deuteronomy 6:1-7



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God Has A Dream For Your Life